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New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 23rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MORENO FERNANDEZ (Cuba)
(Vice-Chairman)

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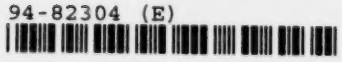

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In the absence of Mr. Hudyma (Ukraine), Mr. Moreno Fernández (Cuba), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 79: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued) (A/48/403; A/49/114-S/1994/357, A/49/136, A/49/228-S/1994/827, A/49/287-S/1994/894 and Corr.1, A/49/335, A/49/336, A/49/479; A/C.4/49/L.12)

1. Mr. RODRIGO (Sri Lanka) said that few aspects of United Nations activities had attracted as much international attention, or aroused such controversy, as peace-keeping operations. There were a number of reasons for that: firstly, millions of people throughout the world were the victims of conflicts. Second, unlike the classic or traditional peace-keeping exercises of the past, many of the current operations were extremely complex. They included the deployment and protection of humanitarian relief, human rights monitoring, electoral assistance, border surveillance, disarmament verification and the protection and rehabilitation of refugees. Third, the unprecedented escalation in the number of operations and in their cost, in human as well as material terms, had seriously depleted the limited resources of the Organization. Fourth, peace-keeping personnel had been placed at great personal risk and the death toll among them had risen sharply in the recent past. Finally, the burden of peace-keeping operations was taking precedence over other imperatives in economic and social development.

2. Peace-keeping operations had become a central concern for all States. In that context, the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations provided a stimulus as an important forum in which issues of substance relating to peace-keeping operations could be freely raised and collectively explored. The fact that 77 members of the Special Committee and observers had participated in its work during its spring 1994 session clearly indicated a widespread interest in ensuring that peace-keeping measures contributed, in the most effective manner possible, to international peace and security.

3. His delegation had been pleased to participate in the meeting held at the initiative of Argentina and New Zealand to develop a practice of consultations involving the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries when decisions were to be made on the extension, amendment or termination of the mandates of peace-keeping operations. An open dialogue on that matter in the Security Council would make that process more democratic and generally more acceptable to the membership of the Organization on whose behalf the Council acted.

4. A United Nations peace-keeping operation in any conflict situation should be conducive to a political settlement. However complex a peace-keeping operation might be, it should not be independent of the broader political objective of which it was only a transitory phase. Every encouragement should be given to domestic efforts to promote the peaceful settlement of conflicts

before measures under Chapter VII of the Charter were contemplated. Precise, clearly defined and realistic mandates were essential for the success of peace-keeping operations and the preparatory process should be carefully planned and budgeted so as to minimize any operational complications and costly consequences in terms of personnel and financial material resources.

5. Sri Lanka was pleased to have contributed to the preparation of a convention on the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel. It had recently resumed its modest contributions to the Organization's peace-keeping operations, and in due course it should be able to consider making additional personnel available for peace-keeping activities.

6. Mr. AL-MAHMOUD (Qatar) said that peace-keeping operations were central to the activities of the United Nations and many thousands of Blue Helmets were currently participating in such operations in various parts of the world. A number of operations had clearly been successful. The increase in the number and complexity of operations gave rise to a whole series of organizational and financial problems and problems connected with the integration of military and civilian components. For that reason, a comprehensive review of all aspects of peace-keeping operations was essential. That was the reason for the establishment of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, which had studied the possibilities of strengthening United Nations activities to address the problems of peace-keeping. A high-level working group had been set up which would serve as an essential tool for the Secretary-General in coordinating the activities of various departments in the implementation of recommendations relating to peace-keeping.

7. The broader context of peace-keeping operations was a matter for discussion among the Member States. It was undisputed that peace-keeping operations had gone beyond the traditional framework. They now included such aspects as the monitoring of elections, humanitarian relief, human rights monitoring and the monitoring of the imposition of sanctions and compliance with embargoes on the supply of weapons to opposing parties. The new aim of peace-keeping operations was to utilize any institutional framework to resolve situations in different countries and not to allow the operations themselves to prevent the attainment of the stated objectives. Otherwise, many operations would end in failure, like the operation in Somalia where a series of political and military errors had been made. The failure of the Somalia operation, however, did not mean that peace-keeping operations were any less essential.

8. The costs of peace-keeping operations were increasing and were exacerbating the financial problems of the United Nations. The difficulties that had arisen were a matter for serious concern since they threatened to weaken the organization's peace-keeping potential. A more orderly approach to peace-keeping operations would enable the Organization to look to the future with greater confidence.

9. He drew attention to the important issue of consultations between the Security Council, which approved peace-keeping operations, and troop-contributing States. The Security Council has devoted two meetings to that

issue, at which it had prepared a document calling for the enhancement of the arrangements for consultation with troop-contributing States.

10. His delegation believed that peace-keeping operations should be designed to attain specific goals and that the international community should take measures to ensure the success of such operations. That was particularly important in the post-cold-war era.

11. The Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had prepared a number of recommendations, including recommendations on cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and regional agencies. Qatar was in favour of strengthening the potential of regional organizations in peace-keeping matters in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. The activities of regional organizations came under the concept of preventive diplomacy, as expounded by the Secretary-General in "An Agenda for Peace". Since regional organizations were familiar with regional conditions and the conditions in which potential conflicts arose, they could play a vital role in their prevention and control.

12. Qatar stressed the importance of strengthening peace-keeping arrangements in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Since peace-keeping operations served the main purpose of the United Nations, it was essential to remove their inherent defects, so as to help the Organization to meet the challenges before it and to overcome the difficulties caused by the increase in the number of peace-keeping operations. His delegation believed that it was important to assist the United Nations in resolving problems relating to the financing of such operations.

13. Mr. GOGSADZE (Georgia) stressed the need to improve the mechanism for the prompt implementation of a United Nations decision to activate its peace-keeping forces. The adoption by the Security Council of nine resolutions on the situation in Georgia and the forging of close cooperation between the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) and the peace-keeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) had raised hopes for a peaceful settlement of the armed conflict in his country. Yet, to date, the Member States had been unable to find the financial resources, troop contingents or political will necessary for a peace-keeping operation in Georgia.

14. Considering that the United Nations had no readily deployable troops or significant stockpiles of equipment and in view of the difficulty of securing the prompt participation in peace-keeping operations of troops from different countries, Georgia supported the proposal regarding the creation of a regular United Nations standby force which would be subordinated to the Military Staff Committee. Many conflicts could perhaps be localized and diffused at an early stage if the United Nations had at its disposal a relatively small mobile rapid reaction and deployment force. Georgia welcomed the initiative of the Netherlands in that regard.

15. Global security differed qualitatively from the mere aggregate of the national security considerations of different countries. As a result, the concept of national security was increasingly viewed through the prism of

transnational regional responsibilities, which suggested that a viable global security structure could be achieved only if it was firmly based on regional security arrangements tailored to the specific requirements of the participating countries. Such regional organizations could be more flexible, so that they could react quickly to any threat to the security of neighbouring States in the region. In addition, such involvement of regional forces was, in most cases, acceptable for all parties to a conflict. That was evidenced by the participation of CIS and Russian Federation forces in cooperation with United Nations observers in efforts to resolve the conflict in Georgia, and Georgia thanked them for their active and positive role. It was, however, his delegation's understanding that subsequent phases of such operations would be taken over by the United Nations.

16. In "An Agenda for Peace", post-conflict peace-building was included among the four major areas of United Nations activity for the 1990s and beyond. One of the component elements of that multifaceted task - the question of the return of displaced persons and refugees - had attained particular urgency. Notwithstanding the agreements reached, the Abkhaz representatives were employing various ruses to delay the return of refugees to their homes, thus undermining prospects for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Georgia.

17. In the interests of improving the capacity of the Organization in the planning and the command and control of peace-keeping operations, Georgia supported the further strengthening of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations.

18. Mr. YELCHENKO (Ukraine) said that Ukraine highly appreciated United Nations peace-keeping efforts aimed at settling regional conflicts and realized that such activities required intensive political, material and financial support on the part of Member States. Ukraine had already become one of the major contributors of troops to United Nations forces. For example, two Ukrainian battalions, 20 military observers and other officials were serving in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). Ukraine was ready to continue cooperating with the United Nations in that field and considered that the provision of appropriate protection and safety for peace-keeping personnel was an essential condition for such cooperation. It therefore hoped that the convention on that issue, the elaboration of which it had initiated, together with New Zealand, would enjoy unanimous support and be adopted by consensus at the current session of the General Assembly.

19. Developments in the former Yugoslavia had focused attention on problems relating to the effectiveness of United Nations peace-keeping operations, demonstrating the need for a clearer definition of the principles for the conduct of such operations, including, inter alia, a precise mandate, a link with a negotiating process and reasons for coercive action. In the transition to a multi-polar world, it had become evident that no single country could claim to be an effective guarantor of peace by relying exclusively on its own strength - something which would, in any event, be incompatible with universally recognized rules and principles. Unfortunately, the United Nations, too, was not yet quite ready to assume that important role.

20. The proper financing of peace-keeping operations had proved to be an especially difficult problem owing to the unpredictability and irregularity of contributions from Member States. Stability in that sphere could not be reached without a fair and adequate apportionment of costs among all Member States in conformity with their capacity to pay. That was an urgent political question which should be considered directly by the General Assembly in the current year. Another matter that could not wait was the solution of the problem regarding the relocation of Ukraine, and Belarus, from group (b) to group (c) in the scheme for apportioning the costs of peace-keeping operations.

21. The main reason for the crisis in the United Nations peace-keeping effort had proved to be changes in the conditions and circumstances of conflicts. Classic operations had tended to start after the conclusion of the "hot" phase, whereas in many modern conflicts the United Nations intervened when the battle was at its height, which changed the principle of the use of peace-keeping forces. Moreover, the parties involved in conflicts were often not able to provide adequate conditions for United Nations forces to accomplish their mandate, because a distinctive attribute of current conflicts was the phenomenon of "field commanders" who obeyed no one. Greater attention must therefore be given to the proper training of peace-keeping personnel.

22. It was also high time to renew the mechanisms of peace-keeping operations on the basis of the Charter. The creation of United Nations rapid deployment forces must be accelerated. Ukraine had already declared its readiness to take part in the process.

23. The proposal to hold informal discussions involving the members of the Security Council and all troop-contributing countries should be supported. Representatives of the regional organizations that were engaged in support of peace-keeping operations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the case of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), could also take part. His delegation gave its full support to the coordinating mechanisms referred to in the statement by the President of the Security Council of 4 November 1994.

24. Although fully recognizing the role of regional organizations and arrangements in United Nations peace-keeping efforts, the Ukraine could not accept the idea of any country claiming some kind of "open mandate" from the United Nations or the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). His country strongly believed that the deployment of peace-keeping operations in the CSCE region should be based on the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the basic principles of the Helsinki Declaration.

25. Taking into account Security Council resolution 937 (1994) of 21 July 1994, Ukraine was ready to explore the possibility of sending its military observers to the area of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. It had also responded positively to the proposal regarding participation in the future CSCE peace-keeping mission in Nagorny Karabakh.

26. Reaffirming its strong belief in the important role of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, his delegation also paid tribute to the memory of those who had sacrificed their lives in the service of peace.

27. Mr. ROWE (Australia) said that the combined impact of conflicts in Rwanda, Somalia and Bosnia over the past year had had a corrosive effect on the standing of the United Nations. Its public image of failing to meet its responsibilities, and being unequal to challenges facing it, overshadowed its continuing work in the economic, social and humanitarian spheres. The image was deeply unfair, since ultimately the United Nations could do no more than its Member States allowed it to do.

28. To achieve the basic objectives of peace, development and human rights and justice it had to be recognized that they were indissolubly bound up with each other. The distinction between "peace and security", on the one hand, and "development" on the other had too often been a matter for sterile and unhelpful debate. Any viable modern concept of international peace had to recognize that there could be no sustainable peace without development and no development without peace.

29. The work carried out in the area of peace-keeping reform since the production of "An Agenda for Peace" had been laudable. Nevertheless, much still needed to be done. It was, for example, essential that the report and draft resolutions of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations should not merely repeat those of earlier texts, but should contain innovative observations and recommendations. There was also a need for Member States to give substance to their rhetoric in relation to the funding of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. In that connection Australia looked forward to early action in the Fifth Committee on the proposals put forward in the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/48/945. The main reason for the growth of the omnibus resolution and its tendency towards generalization was that it had become caught up in that same "sterile and unhelpful" debate between peace and development. Another cause, however, was the desire of many Member States to defend their prerogatives at the expense of needed reform. That approach was shortsighted and was harmful to both peace and development.

30. Australia was greatly encouraged that the initiative to widen the consultative process among the Security Council, the Secretariat, troop contributors and other interested Member States had been confirmed in the statement of the President of the Council of 4 November 1994. That was an excellent example of concrete reform.

31. His delegation valued highly the practice of creating informal working groups to push forward innovative proposals. The ideas that had resulted from recently established working groups had the potential to influence peace-keeping reform substantially and should not be lost sight of. It was time that the Special Committee was also energized into producing new initiatives. His delegation intended to put forward a number of specific proposals for consideration by the Special Committee in 1995 concerning definitions and agreed terminology for peace-keeping operations and the need for an institutionalized,

deliberate and immediate planning process for peace-keeping. He also wished to see particular attention given to the improvement of the logistic capacity of the United Nations, to training and to the need for a rapid deployment capability.

32. The importance of peace-keeping reform was self-evident. The safety of the Organization's armed forces and of civilians on United Nations duty should be paramount. Since the standing of the United Nations and the realization of the lofty goals of the Charter were also directly affected by the work of the Committee, Australia called on it once again to work with a sharper focus to advance the process of real and effective reform of United Nations peace-keeping.

33. Mr. ZIAUDDIN (Bangladesh) said that Bangladesh consistently supported the role of the United Nations in conflict resolution and the promotion of peace. Bangladesh was proud of the fact that it was the fourth largest contributor with more than 5,000 troops in over 11 conflict areas. It was prepared to continue and, within its limitations, augment its role.

34. The marked growth in peace-keeping activities over the past few years had been accompanied by personnel, financial, military and administrative and political difficulties, problems in bolstering public opinion and disseminating public information and the need to ensure the safety of peace-keeping personnel. The debate was continuing on the extent and nature of peace-keeping activities. Underlying that debate was latent criticism that peace-keeping activities were diverting attention and resources away from development goals.

35. While his delegation supported the main components and thrust of the draft resolution under consideration, it wished to comment on a few important points. It concurred with the view that there was a need to define clear-cut mandates with achievable and militarily feasible objectives and establish rules of engagement; there was also a need for secured financing and careful analysis of the situation.

36. The need for impartiality, full transparency and continuous consultation, especially with troop-contributing countries, was imperative not only in the decision-making phase but also in the assessment of the effectiveness of peace-keeping operations. The role of the General Assembly should be enhanced to include the elaboration of principles and guidelines for the conduct of such operations. His delegation welcomed the statements by the President of the Security Council of 3 May and 4 November 1994 relating to the strengthening of consultations on peace-keeping questions.

37. His delegation associated itself with many other delegations that had emphasized the need for clear-cut political directions and unified command and control structures for each operation. All peace-keeping personnel should be under the exclusive operational command of the United Nations.

38. His delegation was strongly in favour of strengthening of the role of the civilian police as well as qualified civilian personnel to deal with the growing multidimensional aspects of peace-keeping operations.

39. He commended the Secretary-General's efforts to consolidate stand-by arrangements. The preparation of manuals and handbooks on standard procedures was a useful supplement in facilitating that process. Bangladesh had already agreed in principle with the concept of a stand-by force and was seriously considering the number and nature of troop contribution to the proposed force. One of the difficulties faced by smaller countries involved the provision of equipment that might be required in different locales. The Secretary-General had suggested that, in such cases, standing arrangements should be made with other Member States that were able to provide the necessary equipment. That matter should be further examined with a view to overcoming the fundamental dilemma of scarcity of troops and the lack of equipment of those that could provide the manpower.

40. Serious consideration should be given to the Secretary-General's proposals on the rationalization of the budgetary process. His delegation fully concurred that the financing of peace-keeping operations was the collective responsibility of all Member States, and joined its voice to those who had expressed deep concern over some States' failure to pay dues in full and on time. Of particular concern was the adverse impact on reimbursement of troop-contributors. His delegation wished to re-emphasize that resources for peace-keeping should not be at the expense of resources for United Nations development activities.

41. His delegation fully supported the initiative for a legally binding convention on the safety of United Nations and associated personnel. It had noted the Secretary-General's efforts to bear in mind the requirements of specific situations and cooperate with troop-contributing countries and the Security Council in that regard. Further in-depth appraisal of such situations was needed to enhance the safety of such personnel. The question of standardized compensation and timely payments of all affected personnel was also essential.

42. His delegation associated itself with the many other delegations that had stressed the vital importance of training and a more active role in the field of public information.

43. The draft resolution had rightly emphasized the need to enhance cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations, arrangements and agencies capable of assisting it in its peace-keeping activities. In conclusion, his delegation underscored the importance of continuously consolidating the Organization's capability to conduct peace-keeping operations as an essential supplement to preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-building.

44. Mr. STEWARD (South Africa) said that the item under consideration was undoubtedly one of the most important issues that the Organization had on its

agenda. His delegation could not fail to notice that, of the approximately 70,000 peace-keepers currently deployed, 30,000 were on duty in Africa, with the prospect of that number being increased in the near future as the Security Council considered further action in Rwanda and Angola. That placed a responsibility on Africa that was inescapable. For that reason, his delegation welcomed the references in the draft resolution under consideration to the various proposals and ideas regarding United Nations peace-keeping operations, especially if they would lead to an enhanced capacity for Africa to participate in such operations. His delegation also welcomed the timely initiative of Argentina and New Zealand regarding consultation arrangements between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries set out in the statement of 4 November 1994 by the President of the Council.

45. During the previous world order, much of the international community's energy had been devoted to the creation of rival armed camps; in the new world order, as much energy was expended on local conflicts. All that energy could be better put to work for the common interests of the members of the international community.

46. In his address to the General Assembly earlier in the year, the President of South Africa had asked what could and must be done to ensure that democracy, peace and prosperity prevailed. Mechanisms should be explored that could help translate rhetoric and good intentions into concrete action. In southern Africa, such exploration should take place within the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The concept of regional security could be extended to the wider context of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The establishment in June 1993 at the OAU summit in Cairo of a mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution had been a welcome first step. At the 1994 summit in Tunis, South Africa had been elected vice-chairman of that mechanism. As a member of the mechanism, South Africa intended to remain in communication with fellow OAU members to explore the best ways of conflict prevention in Africa.

47. It should be remembered that Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa, acting on behalf of OAU, had recently succeeded in preventing a possible armed conflict in Lesotho. Similarly, a firm position adopted by the leaders of South Africa, Zimbabwe and other countries had recently averted a possible setback for democracy in Mozambique. South Africa welcomed the discussions on preventive diplomacy which were taking place within the Organization. Military involvement should be considered only on an exceptional basis, should flow only from regional consensus and should be based on clear criteria and guidelines.

48. That did not mean that South Africa was unsympathetic to African causes outside its region. The Government and people of South Africa, for example, had contributed substantially towards emergency humanitarian relief in Rwanda. South Africa was ready to listen and discuss the various proposals that had already been put forward to see how they could be reconciled and integrated with the aims and objectives of the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

49. Speaking recently at a workshop in Cape Town, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa had stated that, whereas in the past South Africa's neighbours had been wary of its military machine, deliberate transparency and the concerted utilization of common resources to ensure regional stability would lay the cornerstones for fruitful inter-State cooperation. South Africa was a democratic State which sought to promote the strengthening of the democratic tradition thr[illegible]ghout its region: it was well known that democracies were least likely to enter into military confrontation and conflict.

50. Having rejoined the international community, South Africa would fulfil its obligations under the Charter. With regard to peace-keeping, it had made a military officer available to serve in the Secretariat's Situation Centre so that he could gain first-hand knowledge of United Nations peace-keeping operations. In addition, at the end of October 1994, a technical team from the Field Operations Division had visited South Africa and had explained United Nations stand-by arrangements to a variety of South African audiences.

51. With regard to regional organizations, South Africa would explore the various mechanisms that could be developed within SADC and OAU to ensure peace and stability in the region and in the broader context of Africa. The fundamental objective of South Africa's regional policy was to prevent conflict through preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and humanitarian assistance, thereby strengthening regional peace and security. The Ministers of Defence of the countries of East and Southern Africa, meeting in Arusha on 11 November 1994 under the auspices of SADC, had agreed to establish a peace-keeping mechanism including the formation of a rapid deployment force to deal with regional conflicts. That force was intended to take the form of a standing army, but would depend on a process that would ensure its rapid mobilization. The Ministers, together with their army, air force, intelligence and police chiefs, had also agreed to organize joint training programmes between the 11 countries of the region.

52. Mr. IDRIS (Sudan), noting the humanitarian nature of peace-keeping operations, which were aimed at alleviating human suffering, said that, in his country's view, the basic characteristics of such operations should be the following. All parties to the conflict should agree to the carrying out of such operations and the peacekeeping personnel, for their part, should show complete impartiality to all sides. The decision to undertake a peace-keeping operation should be taken by the full membership of the General Assembly and should not be left only to the discretion of the Security Council, particularly since five of its members had the sole right of veto, which was not always used in the interests of small States. In carrying out any peace-keeping operation, the aim should not be a military solution to the conflict, but a political settlement. Peace-keeping personnel should respect the territorial integrity of the countries to which they were sent and should not interfere in their internal affairs. Lastly, it was essential to have a mechanism to calculate the administrative and budgetary costs of such operations.

53. In recent years, there had been an enormous increase in the number of peace-keeping operations, in Africa and elsewhere. Many of the operations conducted in Africa had been undertaken without a serious analysis of regional characteristics. The failure to take full account of the severity of the tribal clashes in Rwanda had resulted in a tragedy for the whole of Africa. The delay in the peaceful settlement of the conflict which had arisen in Somalia had led to a fratricidal war in that country. In Somalia, the peace-keeping forces had approached the problem incorrectly and had erred when they had made it their aim to arrest one of the country's political leaders. As a result, they had immediately lost their impartiality, and the aims they had been pursuing had taken on a dubious character. The too severe resolutions of the United Nations on Somalia had been a great mistake. In the meantime, while both the League of Arab States (LAS) and OAU had then begun to take practical steps towards a settlement of the Somali conflict, the United Nations had rushed through the Security Council a strong decision which did not take into account the traditions of the region. That had led to a catastrophe.

54. To give the Security Council its due, having realized the scale of the problem, it had adopted resolution 954 (1994) which provided for the withdrawal of United Nations troops from Somalia by 31 March 1995. The Council had also urged the Somali side to work towards peace and had invited the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and neighbouring States to assist the people of Somalia.

55. From a study of peace-keeping operations during the past five years, his delegation noted with regret the double standard which was applied, as reflected in the approach to Bosnia and Herzegovina. A situation had developed in which the victim did not have the capability to defend itself with arms and the guilty aggressor was committing brutalities with free access to arms. It was to be hoped that, as in the case of Somalia, the Security Council would recognize the error of its position, which was injuring the Muslim population of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

56. While Sudan supported efforts to ensure the safety of United Nations personnel, it nevertheless had reservations with regard to the draft convention which had been prepared on the safety of United Nations and associated personnel. Those reservations related to the fact that, in his delegation's opinion, the essential questions had already been dealt with in the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and the draft convention merely added the formulation "and associated personnel". The fact was that Sudan had to deal with certain individuals and non-governmental organizations that did not respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sudan and endeavoured to bypass valid agreements which set certain limits on their activities. His delegation's representative in the Sixth Committee had commented on that question in detail.

57. Mr. ABDELLAH (Tunisia) said that if the United Nations was to carry out its role in the maintenance of international peace and security it was essential to adopt a comprehensive approach, not limited to the political or military aspects of conflicts but embracing also their economic and social consequences. Noting

that the number and complexity of peace-keeping operations meant that they should be governed by definite rules and principles to ensure their successful conclusion, he emphasized that peace-keeping operations should not be a substitute for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

58. With regard to the question of a consultative mechanism, he welcomed the Security Council's decision to hold regular discussions among members of the Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat. He recalled that Article 47 of the United Nations Charter provided for the participation of all Member States in the work of the Military Staff Committee.

59. Turning to the question of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, he stressed the important role of a centralized mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa in maintaining peace in that continent. For the efficient functioning of such a mechanism, however, financial, material and technical resources were required, and in that regard the support of the international community would be desirable. His delegation welcomed the fact that the draft resolution on peace-keeping operations (A/C.4/49/L.12) included the provision that ways and means should be considered to assist regional arrangements and agencies engaged in peace-keeping, and hoped that specific proposals to strengthen such bodies, particularly in Africa, would be made.

60. With regard to the Organization's serious financial situation and the related difficulties regarding reimbursement for troop-contributing countries, his delegation believed that, given the limited resources of troop-contributing developing countries, the Organization should give them priority in providing such reimbursement.

61. Tunisia had from the outset supported the idea of elaborating an international instrument on the safety of peace-keeping personnel. In that connection his delegation stressed the need to introduce a set of rules on compensation in the event of death or disability and to establish a standard scale.

62. Lastly, he spoke in appreciation of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations and the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, and expressed the hope that other interested countries would be included in the Committee to enable them to participate in its work.

63. Mr. ALLAREY (Philippines) said that the current state of thinking on United Nations peace-keeping operations was that they were but one of the means available to the Organization for resolving conflicts deemed to be threats to international peace and security. Peace-keeping operations should be preceded or accompanied by measures aimed at a pacific settlement of disputes through political means.

64. He supported the recommendation of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations that a set of principles or guidelines for peace-keeping operations

should be elaborated. In that connection he recalled that the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had adopted a set of guiding principles for peace-keeping operations that should be fully taken into account in the establishment and conduct of United Nations peace-keeping operations. One of those principles touched on one of the most important issues for his delegation, namely that of strengthening political direction and support for peace-keeping operations through consultation between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries. In that connection his delegation appreciated the recent positive steps taken by the Security Council to improve the transparency of, and enhance the participation of non-members of the Council in, its decision-making process. In addition to enhanced consultation between the Security Council and troop contributors, a more active role was needed for the General Assembly in dealing with international peace and security matters and peace-keeping operations, over and above its responsibilities for financing them. One possible activity the General Assembly could consider would be to undertake a periodic consideration and evaluation of all current United Nations peace-keeping operations.

65. With regard to the question of funding peace-keeping operations, he drew attention to the existing scale of assessment established by General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII) and expressed the view that the allocation of additional resources for peace-keeping operations should be made without prejudice to United Nations development activities, which were a priority in their own right. As for the problem of delays in reimbursement for troop costs and compensation to troop-contributing countries, the Philippines saw a need to review the current procedures and wondered whether it would not be possible to streamline certain requirements or at least to provide clearer procedures, so as to accelerate the time taken in processing and acting upon claims.

66. Mr. BELYAEV (Belarus) expressed his gratitude to the Chairman of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping operations for the elaboration of a comprehensive report containing a whole range of valuable recommendations. He also noted the usefulness of other reports issued by the Secretary-General.

67. Despite the growing awareness throughout the world of the ideals of democracy and individual rights, as well as the general desire for the development of global cooperation, there were in many regions of the world centres of tension which escalated into conflicts when aggression occurred. In such circumstances States took more interest in enhancing the role of the United Nations as the only means of maintaining universal peace. While his delegation attached great importance to United Nations peace-keeping operations, it pointed out the importance of the Organization's work in eliminating the underlying causes of conflict; in that connection it supported the Special Committee's recommendation contained in paragraph 45 of its report (A/49/136). The main task of preventive diplomacy was to bring to light and avert the primary causes of conflict.

68. Measures to prevent a potential conflict would be effective if developed on the basis of a comprehensive study of the nature of such conflicts, taking due account of the interrelation between peacemaking, peace-keeping and humanitarian activities. The success of preventive diplomacy largely depended on the

availability of accurate information, and Belarus noted the timely adoption of the Declaration on Fact-finding by the United Nations in the Field of Maintenance of International Peace and Security. It welcomed the growing recent tendency for United Nations operations to transcend the traditional concept of peace-keeping; the changing character of those operations necessitated the development of principles and procedures for their conduct such as would give Member States a clear view of the purposes and functions of specific operations. Belarus believed that the success of current and future peace-keeping operations depended on respect for the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States, the consent of Governments and parties to a conflict to the deployment of an operation, and the formulation of precise and realistic mandates for those operations.

69. As for the use of military force for the enforcement of peace, the Organization could have recourse to such a measure only in extreme circumstances, when all peaceful means of settling the conflict had been exhausted.

70. The primary role in the settlement of conflicts belonged to the conflicting parties themselves. They should be fully aware that the deployment of a United Nations peace-keeping operation in a conflict area was a form of temporary assistance and should therefore make every possible effort to settle the dispute themselves. For its part, the United Nations should be ready to step up its mediatory functions.

71. Certain peace-keeping operations raised serious questions regarding the role and capacity of the Organization. The Security Council should regularly review - and, where necessary, terminate - operations whose mandates had become unworkable. Belarus attached importance to the development of cooperation between the Organization and regional arrangements. Without detracting from the leading role of the Organization, regional associations should assume greater responsibility and play a more constructive role in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter.

72. The problem of creating a sound, equitable and comprehensively well-founded system for the financing of peace-keeping operations remained one of constant concern. The financing of such operations placed a serious burden on many States, including Belarus. His delegation hoped that, at its current session, the General Assembly would adopt a decision on the relocation of Belarus, whose assessed contribution was unjustifiably high, to group (c) of the scale of assessments for peace-keeping operations.

73. In view of the sharp rise in the number of peace-keeping operations, efforts must be made to contain the expenditure on such operations, primarily by stepping up endeavours to reach a prompt political settlement of conflicts. Countries in which operations were conducted should provide the United Nations with the fullest possible logistical and financial support, so as to reduce the Organization's own financial burden. Financial-control arrangements should also be improved by strengthening the system of audits and inspections.

74. In conclusion, his delegation declared itself ready to cooperate actively with the United Nations in the conduct of peace-keeping operations. Belarus, which shared the concerns of the Secretary-General regarding the shortages of military and other personnel, was currently considering the possibility of participation by its military contingents in those operations.

75. Mr. ESCOBAR (Colombia) said that his country recognized the need for the international community to respond to appeals from countries in critical situations for help from the United Nations, and it had high regard for the efforts of Member States undertaken in pursuit of such noble aims and for the work of the Secretariat in administering that programme. At the same time, it would make no sense to launch military operations to settle every one of the hundreds of conflicts erupting daily around the world. It would be dangerous to follow the path of militarization rather than that of social development and the peaceful settlement of conflicts. A historic chance was at hand for the creation of a model world, in which the unprecedented opportunities for cooperation which had opened up over recent years would be turned to advantage.

76. Crises necessitating collective efforts by the international community would continue to arise in many regions, but those efforts should not be limited to a mere military presence.

77. Colombia shared the views - and the concerns - of other delegations with regard to a number of factors. It attached importance to the comprehensive settlement of certain crisis situations and to the coordination of efforts between the different bodies of the United Nations, as well as to the precise delimitation of the functions of the Secretary-General and the Security Council in that area.

78. The previous two years had seen a sharp increase in expenditure on peace-keeping operations: it was easy, in his opinion, to image what improvements could be made to the social and economic situation of those same regions with the investment of equivalent sums.

79. Turning to the legal aspects of the issue, he stressed that, in all its work in that area, the United Nations should be guided by the provisions of the Charter and by such principles of international law as the non-interference in the internal affairs of States and respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as for the principles of impartiality and the consent of the State in which it was planned to launch an operation. In view of the complex and highly case-specific nature of peace-keeping operations, the international community should, without delay, undertake a study of the legal basis of such operations and remove any remaining hiatuses in that area.

80. In conclusion, he expressed gratitude to those Governments which supported peace-keeping operations, and to the people who had given their lives in pursuit of the ideals of a better world and the deliverance of future generations from the scourge of war - goals to which the United Nations had aspired since its very foundation.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.